Inside Our Classrooms

The Hive This week The Hive have enjoyed a return trip to Oathall Farm as part of Location, Location, Location week. We saw the piglets that were born to the pig who was expecting the last time we went. We helped bring in the piglets, feed the lambs and collect the eggs. We also enjoyed learning about where we live, writing letters to our friends and posting them in the letter box.

Thinkers have been working incredibly hard over the last two weeks to learn and perform a circus performance to both the whole school and parents. They watched a performance from Mr Pineapple head and together came up with acts they would like to try for our own show. They, and some of our fabulous Year 6 buddies, helped create props too! We learnt a circus dance for our finale to the music of 'The Greatest Show'. ALL the children took part and we had a great turnout of parents (and siblings), all of whom thought the show was fantastic! Go Thinkers!

Year 1 explore the school site

Inventors This week in Inventors, we celebrated Location, Location, Location Week by researching our local area and finding out information about our school and where we live. Miss Renfree created a map of our school and Inventors were keen to use directional language and their knowledge of geographical fieldwork to find the missing places on the map. They succeeded in finding all seven spots and had class photos in front of each location. Our new display highlights their fantastic mapping skills and the journey they took around Blackthorns' school grounds. As we approach our Phonics Screening Checks in June, Inventors worked hard to focus on their tricky sounds and enjoyed reading lots of real and alien words! We topped off the week by designing our own crowns and flags and look forward to celebrating The Queen's Platinum Jubilee next week!

Explorers have finished a great half term with geography theme week 'Location, Location, Location'. We focused on Blackthorns and the local area. We completed the school orienteering course and then used Google Earth and aerial maps to sketch a map of the school grounds. In maths we focused on position and direction, describing how objects move and turn.
We also looked at the surrounding area of Lindfield and had a building from the high street to locate on the maps. We drew our building and placed it in order from the pond to All Saints Church to create our own floor map.

Warriors have been continuing to work hard towards the end of term across all subjects! In English, we wrote and delivered persuasive speeches as new colour crayons (shamrock green and ruby red were some examples) to persuade the other crayons to vote for them to take the place of Dandelion crayon (who was retiring) in the box! The children wrote and edited their speeches and then used the microphones and music stand to deliver them with a sense of pride and maturity! We also got to grips with fractions looking at tenths and making whole numbers. In athletics, we started to look at the sprinting technique and how to successfully pass the baton over.
This week has been location week which has seen us find where we live using 4 figure grid references and looked at what the most common letter was in road names in Lindfield; which countries and cities make up the UK and how the weather compares between them as well as going on walks to focus on the human geography of Lindfield and how to best sketch maps!
Ground-breakers This week Groundbreakers got to grips with using 8 point compass directions. They compared the Amazon rainforest with Ashdown Forest (they do both start with A…). A locality walk was a great way to discover the local area and they familiarised themselves with OS maps, their symbols and grid references.

Innovators Location Location Location week for Innovators class kicked off with a rather soggy 5km Welly Walk on Monday morning. Thank you to Rachel Bennington for leading the walk and for the focus on map work and compass skills. We then learnt about the geocoding system 'What3Words' and used this to identify key points from our walk. Back in the classroom, we researched all about Europe's second largest country - Ukraine.

Trailblazers completed their SATS science projects and the winning presentation went to Rom. Theme week has seen us undertaking a village walk to conduct a traffic count. In light of the volume of traffic we counted, we posed the question: would Lindfield benefit from a bypass? We also learned more about the change in physical and human geography since the settlement began way back in the Bronze Age. We have also been learning about how to use a compass and to read 6 figure map references. We even did a spot of orienteering. Work is underway on creating our jubilee crowns - fit for a queen!!

Our fabulous Y6 portraits

Dates for your diary:

30th May-3rd June Half Term

w/c 6th June Year 1 Phonics Screening

6th June—24th June Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check window

10th June—Jubilee Tea Party (Dress in red, white and blue)

13th-17th June Year 6 Residential to IOW

13th June Year Reception Trip to British Wildlife Centre

20th-24th June Sports Week

24th June Sports Day

27th June-1st July Year 6 Bikeability

30th June—Non-Uniform Day

1st July Year 3 Trip—Bluebell Railway

1st July—Grounds Day (3.30pm—6.30pm)

6th July Year 5 Trip—Tower of London

13th July Year 6 Performance

15th July Year 6 End of Year Outing

19th July Year 6 Leavers' Assembly

21st July INSET day and End of Summer Term

E-Safety—Discord

Whilst this platform is aimed at users aged thirteen or above, we are aware that many different sites, games and apps are being accessed by children who are below the ages prescribed by the creators and feel it is important to make people aware of the future sites that might start to appear on home devices or be talked about. Launched in 2015, Discord has steadily emerged as a major player in the online communication marketplace – certainly as far as gamers are concerned. Indeed, with the ability to coordinate gameplay and talk tactics with multiple fellow players in real time, it has also become the collaborative platform of choice for many professional e-sports competitors.

The flip side of Discord's success is that – in addition to genuine gamers who simply want to improve their playing experience or discuss their favourite titles – it's also attracted unsavoury individuals who use the platform to post extreme political views, belittle other users or share explicit content. See the guide from the National Online Safety website at the end of this newsletter.

Celebrating Success

The following children have been recognised by their class teachers for their success during the week and for displaying aspects of the school values: respect, teamwork, determination, independence and kindness.

YR—Elsie and Beth, Y1 Cece— and Stanley , Y2—Toby and Mae, Y3—Indigo and Zayden, Y4— George and Amelia, Y5—Georgia and Bella, Y6—Edward and Billy

Golden Rule certificates for treating others with exceptional consideration went to Harper (YR), Noa (Y1) Jessica (Y3), Ana-Maria (Y5) and all of Innovators!

House Cup

Fire won the house cup this week! It had been a long wait, but the Fire house were pleased to get back to winning ways!

Running Towards a Good Cause!

Eriko in Year 5 Innovators class ran the Lindfield 10km on Sunday to raise money for the Ukraine Disasters Emergency Committee.

If you would like to support her and donate to this fantastic charity, please click on the link below:

Eriko Lindfield 10k Ukraine Donation

FOCUS on

History

We have recently redesigned our History curriculum, and are confident that we are delivering to our children a broad and cohesive knowledge of historical periods, events and significant individuals. Each term has been designed to include a modern and ancient period in history that flows cohesively from year group to year group. The idea being that as one year group ends on either a modern or ancient period in history, their subsequent year group will continue at a point close to that in the historical timeline. That way, the children should flow forwards and back through history throughout their Blackthorns journey, rather than following a strict linear progression. We also very hard to ensure that local history is very much a focus in our planning of each topic.

As well as learning key facts and concepts, children will develop their skills in analysing and evaluating historical evidence and in empathising with people from different periods in time, comparing and contrasting various aspects of life. Underpinning all knowledge learned are 3 key focus questions designed by teachers, to clearly assess learning at the end of each topic.

As always at Blackthorns all learning is helped by the wide range of trips and visits each year group plans to consolidate learning, as well as guests who come into school bringing artifacts and conducting workshops. We also have the Now Press Play resource that allows children to take virtual journeys through time. Learning is always fun and creative at Blackthorns. At the end of Year 6 we award two history prizes for those children who have shown a passion for the subject with evidence to support.

Thinkers: Personal history, castles and seaside history

Inventors: History of toys, History of transport, National Trust houses

Explorers: Over land Under Sea, Significant people, Famous explorers

Warriors: Stone Age and Bronze Age, Romans, Victorian Britain

Ground-Breakers: Monarchs, Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, The Ancient Maya

Innovators: Ancient Egypt, The Tudors, Crime and Punishment

Trailblazers: World War 2, Shackleton and Titanic, Ancient Greece

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about
DISCORD

AGE RATING

13+

Servers and channels marked as 'NSFW' require users to be 18 or older to join.

Discord is a free app which allows users to communicate in real time via text, video or voice chat. Available on desktop and mobile devices, it was originally designed to help gamers cooperate – but has evolved into a more general networking platform for a range of online communities, discussing topics like TV series, music, Web3 and more. Discord is organised around closed groups, referred to as 'servers'. To join a server, users must be invited or provided with a unique link. It's a space for users to interact with friends, meet others with shared interests and collaborate privately online — but it's also a place where young people can be exposed to risks if the right precautions aren't taken.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CYBERBULLYING

Discord's easy accessibility and connectivity, unfortunately, makes it an ideal place for cyberbullying to occur – especially as audio and video streams disappear once they've ended, meaning that bullying could take place without leaving any evidence. Closed groups can also be created, giving young people the opportunity to exclude their peers or send cruel messages without adult oversight.

DIFFICULT TO MODERATE

Like many private communication apps, Discord's real-time messaging can be difficult to control. The system enables content moderation through each individual server – so different groups can set their own rules for what's acceptable, and some groups may not monitor for unsuitable content. Anything that happens in an audio or video stream is also virtually untraceable once the stream has concluded.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Discord mainly hosts private groups, making it easier for unsuitable or explicit content to be shared on channels. Pornography, racism and inappropriate language can be found in some groups. Server owners are required to add an age-restriction gate to channels where 18+ content is being shared – but this solution isn't foolproof, as the platform doesn't always verify users' ages when they sign up.

ACCESSIBLE TO PREDATORS

On many chat platforms, users can lie about their age or true identity – and Discord is no exception. Predators have attempted to abuse the platform by using it to contact and communicate with underage users – by initially chatting with a child on an age-appropriate channel, for example. While Discord *has* improved its safety settings, some users will still try to bypass them for malicious reasons.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Discord *does* have strict Terms of Service and Community Guidelines to protect its users – but, sadly, not everyone adheres to them. Criminal activity including grooming, hate speech, harassment, exploitative content, doxxing and extremist or violent material have all been found on Discord servers over the last two years. In 2020, Discord received almost 27,000 reports of illegal activity on the platform.

Advice for Parents & Carers

REVIEW SAFETY SETTINGS

Discord has a series of safety settings, enabling users to choose who can direct message them or send them friend requests. Your child's experience on Discord will be much safer if the app's privacy and safety settings are configured to only allow messages or friend requests from server members. This will minimise the chances of potential predators from outside the group contacting them.

EXPLAIN AGE FILTERING

While Discord requires users to be at least 13 to sign up, many servers geared towards older users are flagged as NSFW (not safe for work), which indicates they probably contain material that's inappropriate for children. It can be easy to click through settings without properly reviewing them, so ensure your child understands why age filtering is important and that it's there to protect them.

SCREEN OUT EXPLICIT CONTENT

In the privacy and safety settings, Discord users are offered the ability to filter direct messages for inappropriate content: a setting that should be enabled if your child uses the platform. Discord automatically tries to flag *images* that are explicit, but the setting must be manually enabled for text. If a young user is sent explicit content in a direct message, Discord will scan and (if necessary) delete it.

MONITOR ONLINE ACTIVITY

It's wise to regularly review your child's activity on Discord. This can include checking their safety settings to ensure they're correctly enabled, talking about which servers they've joined and reviewing some of their friends and direct messages. Ask if anything has made them feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Things can change quickly online, so plan routine check-ins and follow up frequently.
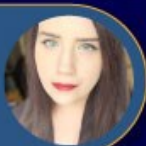
DISCUSS GOOD ONLINE BEHAVIOUR

The anonymity offered by the internet often leads people to communicate more openly and behave differently than they would at school or home. It's crucial to bear in mind, though, that every internet user is still a real person. Talk to your child about the severe and lasting consequences that cyberbullying or exchanging inappropriate material online can have in the real world.

HAVE CANDID CONVERSATIONS

It can sometimes be awkward to discuss topics like grooming, pornography, racism or explicit content with your child – but it's important to ensure they're aware of the harms these things can pose. Talking openly about these subjects is a great way to help your child feel more comfortable about coming to you if they experience an unwanted encounter on Discord (or anywhere else online).

Meet Our Expert

Coral Cripps is a Canadian-born, London-based tech journalist at gmw3.com: a website specialising in all things Web3, gaming and XR (extended reality). With a focus on brands and culture, she researches and writes about the ways that our current innovations — including the metaverse and Web3 — are impacting people, places and things.

National Online Safety®

NOS

#WakeUpWednesday